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SEARCHING FOR LIFE

A firefighter, centre, lies with his hand thrust into an empty area underneath a clothing rack below the rubble of a collapsed building on the edge of downtown Philadelphia on Wednesday. A four-storey building being demolished collapsed earlier in the day, sending bricks crashing down on a Salvation Army thrift store, injuring at least 13 people. See story on page 4.

MICHAEL BRYANT/THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A skeeter-lite spring, so far

Rejoice! Pests give it a rest. Regina seeing lower-than-expected mosquito numbers, thanks in part to slow thaw and low rainfall

ROSS ROMANIUK
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Instead of the itchy, scratchy and slappy spring that Regina had anticipated, low mosquito numbers have the city buzzing.

Saskatchewan's capital has so far escaped the onslaught of nuisance mosquitoes that some experts had predicted late this past winter when huge snowfalls threatened to leave vast, wet hatching grounds for the bugs.

What the Queen City has this week, surprisingly, are even lower skeeter numbers in municipal traps than were caught a year ago at this time.

"In all 10 traps, we caught eight last week. Last year, we were catching two to three in each trap," Ray Morgan, the City of Regina's manager of forestry, pest control and horticulture, said on Wednesday evening.

"They're certainly lower numbers than what we thought we'd have when we were sitting in March, thinking about how much snow there was. We thought we were going to have quite a busy season."

Though the snow had posed a serious problem, a dry ground last fall and the very slow thaw in April — as well as low rainfall more recently — have significantly shifted that situation.

"A lot of it evaporated. A lot of it went into the ground," Morgan said of the moisture left behind by the snow.

"There was not much runoff. And subsequently, there wasn't that much standing water lying around in some places.

"Whatever there was, crews were able to get to it fairly early in the season around the end of April, and treat those water bodies."

As part of a yearly insect-control budget of about $500,000, the city has 20 crew members spreading larvicide in standing water — much of it in marshy areas, using an amphibious machine.

Morgan pointed out, though, that the low mosquito numbers are sure to rise — possibly dramatically — after the next heavy downpour.

"All it takes is one inch of rainfall, and we're going to start seeing an increase in the population — there's no question," he said.

"But the way the trend is continuing with this dry spell, we're expecting mosquito numbers to be low to moderate at this time."

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Saskatchewan skies are clean, clear, under control

Pollution. Province to use mobile lab to set baseline for air quality and track changes

ALYSSA MCDONALD
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Despite the province's growing economy and population, the Ministry of Environment says Saskatchewan's air quality remains "very good."

The government's air monitoring conducted across the province is ensuring the ministry can track any changes in quality, especially with more and more industries making Saskatchewan their home.

"We are establishing a baseline, (so) going forward we will know if there are any changes in our air quality," Environment Minister Ken Cheveldayoff said at a Clean Air Day event on Wednesday.

At the event at the legislature grounds, the ministry showed off its mobile Saskatchewan Air Monitoring Laboratory (SAML), a refitted mobile home that travels across the province collecting samples.

"Anywhere that there is a large development, a large structure that involves gases or anything that may be admitted to the air, that's something that we monitor," said Cheveldayoff, adding that SAML has visited 40 locations since 2010.

The mobile SAML collects the same information as six standing air-monitoring stations in Saskatchewan and takes samples on an hourly basis to be examined for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and other such pollutants.

Technicians travel with the SAML and leave it at each site for approximately two weeks, except in the case of an emergency response.

The information is transmitted to Regina.

Check-up

At the six standing stations on Wednesday at 4 p.m.:

- **Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina were "good,"** meaning an Air Quality Index of zero to 25
- **Buffalo Narrows, North Battleford and Swift Current were "fair,"** meaning between 25 and 50

The Saskatchewan Air Monitoring Laboratory travels across the province to collect air samples. ALYSSA MCDONALD/METRO

Senator, lawyer suing CBC for libel

Regina lawyer Tony Merchant
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE/CBC NEWS

Sen. Pana Merchant and her husband, lawyer Tony Merchant, have launched a libel lawsuit against the CBC.

A statement of claim filed in Saskatoon Court of Queen's Bench involves a CBC story that said Tony Merchant had put $1.7 million into offshore tax havens. A TV story entitled Merchant of Secrecy was followed by radio and online reports.

The Merchants say the stories left the impression that they broke the law.

The statement of claim also names two CBC reporters and a journalist with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists in Washington, D.C. — the organization that leaked financial information about thousands of people.

The claim says video of yachts and tropical islands were backed with audio that said: "While most citizens pay their taxes, some rich ones use a secretive off-shore world to hide what they really have."

The statement of claim alleges that the broadcaster used old stock footage of Tony Merchant working late and created the impression that he would not come out to be interviewed.

The statement also alleges that the story gave the impression that Sen. Merchant had breached Senate rules about declaring that she was a beneficiary of her husband's account.

Tony Merchant is a Regina-based lawyer who routinely takes on high-profile, class-action lawsuits, including one involving residential schools.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Swift Current

Charges laid in case reminiscent of Rehtaeh Parsons

Three youths in southwestern Saskatchewan are charged with sexual assault involving a teenage girl.

The RCMP aren't saying much about what allegedly happened because they want to protect the girl.

Mounties say the charges were laid in mid-May after a girl and her parents went to authorities in Swift Current.

Two of the three boys are also charged with criminal harassment. One of them is charged with distributing child porn after a video of an assault was allegedly shared.

RCMP Cpl. Rob King said the teens all know each other. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Maple Creek

Boy pleads guilty to abducting girl

One of the teenage boys charged after a 14-year-old girl from Maple Creek was taken from her home in early January has pleaded guilty to abducting a person under 16.

He is to be sentenced July 11.

Police issued an Amber Alert at the time, and two days later the girl was brought to police and two 16-year-old boys and a 38-year-old woman were arrested.

The other two charged in the case are to be back in court next week.

It was alleged the girl, who was eight months pregnant at the time, was forcibly taken from her family's home by her boyfriend.

The Amber Alert was issued after the girl's family reported a pair of intruders wearing ski masks burst into the home demanding the girl pack some clothes and leave with them.

The family told police that one of the culprits, who was wielding a small wooden bat, walked through the home and found the girl.

CJME/CKOM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Public outcry. Israeli judge resigns after comment about girls enjoying rape

A Tel Aviv District Court judge has resigned following a public furor over comments he made in court that some girls "enjoy being raped."

Nissim Yeshaya was presiding over a hearing on the rape of a 13-year-old Israeli girl by four Palestinian youths when he made the comment. He apologized and said the remark was taken out of context.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was among officials who harshly criticized the judge. He also withdrew his support for Yeshaya's appointment as head of his Likud Party's internal court. Several lawmakers called for the judge's immediate dismissal. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stepping down

Israel's justice minister said Wednesday Yeshaya expressed his desire to leave his post at a hearing.

Jamaica. 'Unrelenting violence' against kids a chronic problem: UNICEF

The United Nations' child welfare agency said Wednesday that it is deeply concerned about what it describes as "unrelenting violence" against youngsters in Jamaica, including the recent beheading of a 4-year-old girl.

Robert Fuderich, UNICEF's representative in Jamaica, said a recent spate of grisly crimes targeting school children has underscored a chronic and disturbing problem in the Caribbean country that has put authorities on alert and parents on edge. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sinister trend

"The killing of several children, in close succession, is a tragic reminder of the violence being meted out to children on a daily basis."

UNICEF representative Robert Fuderich

Tainted beef. Indecisive report on nation's juiciest recall leaves bad taste

Nearly a year after tainted Alberta beef sickened 18 people, briefly blocked exports to the U.S. and cast doubts on the safety of Canada's food supply, no one can say for sure what led to the largest meat recall in Canadian history.

It could have been a horde of germs from a contaminated animal passing through a super shredder, a new report suggests. Or an improperly decontaminated carcass. Or simply a case of too much bacteria for the plant to handle.

One thing is for certain: Neither staff nor federal inspectors at the XL Foods plant in Brooks, Alta., were taking food safety seriously enough last September to prevent the crisis from happening, a three-member review panel has concluded.

"We found a relaxed attitude towards applying mandatory procedures — clearly outlined in some documents, less so in others," says the report. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Femen activists expelled

Tunisian feminist activist Amina Sboui, hidden by a veil, is escorted by police officers as she leaves the courthouse in Kairouan, Tunisia, Wednesday. Sboui, a Tunisian member of radical Ukrainian feminist group Femen, scandalized the country by posting topless photos of herself protesting for women's rights in March. Three members of the group were expelled from Tunisia on suspicion they were planning a topless protest in front of the court where their colleague was being tried for another incident, the Interior Ministry said Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Victims pulled from rubble after building collapse

Philadelphia. Demolition gone wrong buries adjacent thrift store in debris

A building that was being torn down collapsed with a thunderous boom Wednesday in Philadelphia, raining bricks on a neighbouring thrift store and injuring at least 13 people in an accident that witnesses said was bound to happen.

Rescuers pulled a woman trapped amid the rubble of a Salvation Army thrift store after they heard her voice, city Fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers said, and the search for survivors continued hours after the 10:45 a.m. collapse.

"We do not know how many people were actually in the thrift store this morning when the wall collapsed on the building," Mayor Michael Nutter said late Wednesday afternoon. "So the search and rescue will continue ... until we literally get to the basement and have uncovered everything we can possibly uncover."

Survivors were taken to hospitals with minor injuries, Ayers said, adding that a 14th person was found in the rubble. He declined to comment on the person's condition.

There was no confirmation of any fatalities at press time.

Firefighters carry a survivor from the rubble of a four-storey building that collapsed in downtown Philadelphia Wednesday. MICHAEL BRYANT/PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The collapse involved an empty building that once housed a first-floor sandwich shop and apartments above. The thrift shop was on one side. The other side was an adult bookstore and theatre that had been taken down within the last few months.

Several witnesses said they had been casting a wary eye on the demolition site and questioned how the workers were tackling the job. That raised questions about how closely the highly visible spot on Market Street — one of Philadelphia's signature boulevards — was being monitored. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vancouver

Nanny claims she was forced to work 16-hour days

A Filipina nanny's voice tensed up with emotion as she described the day she called police after one of her employers pushed her and doused her with a jug of water in Vancouver.

Leticia Sarmiento, who is testifying at a human trafficking trial, said Wednesday that the physical altercation in June 2010 involved Oi Ling Nicole Huen.

Sarmiento said she called police and finally escaped from the home where she had been working as a live-in nanny since 2008.

Huen and Franco Yiu Kwan Orr are facing charges after allegations that they forced Sarmiento into domestic servitude. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Thousands evacuated

Floods charge through Germany, Czech Republic

Desperate families were plucked from rooftops by helicopters, cars were swept away by raging torrents and levees failed without warning Wednesday as central Europe staggered under an inland ocean of flooding.

Tens of thousands of people had to be evacuated in Germany and the Czech Republic and chemical plants along the mighty Danube and Elbe rivers were hastily shut down. City officials, federal troops and emergency workers across a vast region either raced to prepare or struggled to cope as flood crests roared downstream.

More than 19,000 were evacuated in the Czech Republic. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Blow to rebel forces

Hezbollah helps Syrian troops seize border town

Syrian troops and their Lebanese Hezbollah allies captured a strategic border town Wednesday after a gruelling three-week battle, dealing a severe blow to rebels and opening the door for President Bashar Assad's regime to seize back the country's central heartland.

The regime triumph in Qusair, which Assad's forces had bombarded for months without success, demonstrates the potentially game-changing role of Hezbollah in Syria's civil war. The gain could also embolden Assad to push for all-out military victory rather than participate in peace talks being promoted by the U.S. and Russia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Remembering Amanda

R.I.P Amanda Todd
"Suicide does not end the Choices of Life others keeps. Suicide changes the positions of it. Keep getting better."
Rest peacefully

AMANDA TODD, THE B.C. TEEN WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE LAST YEAR AFTER BEING BULLIED, HAS BEEN COMMEMORATED ON FACEBOOK. THESE ARE SOME IMAGES POSTED ON R.I.P. PAGES CREATED IN HER NAME.

A NEW WAY TO #GRIEVE

Mourning deceased loved ones on social media is common, but commemorative pages can cause additional anxiety for some

RITA POLIAKOV/METRO

On May 12, Alexandra Christopoulos wished her friend Patrick a happy birthday on Facebook.

He'll never read the post.

Patrick Douglas Mott, who would have been 31 this year, died on New Year's Eve in 2009. Soon after, Mott's father started an RIP Facebook group in his son's honour, a group with more than 200 members and hundreds of posts.

This, for many, is the new way to grieve. And some are abusing it. While grieving through social media can be cathartic, it can also rob mourners of their privacy.

For Christopoulos, Mott's online memorial helped in the healing process.

"I think, initially, grief, it's so overwhelming and shocking and you almost feel numb," said Christopoulos, adding that she turned to social media when she felt alone.

"I'll think of him randomly. I'll go online to that page and realize someone else has already been there. They're thinking of him too," she said.

Experiences vary. Amanda Todd, the B.C. teen who committed suicide last year after being relentlessly bullied, has been commemorated on Facebook and Twitter. Her RIP pages have hundreds of thousands of likes, but have also become a forum for more bullying.

Some commenters wrote that the 15-year-old deserved her fate. A topless photo of Todd, the very one that contributed to her agony, was even posted to a memorial page.

According to Pam Fitzgerald, director of the Canadian Centre for Bereavement Education and Grief Counselling in Toronto, social media can be a free-for-all.

"With a sudden, unexpected death, people aren't always sensitive with their judgment and criticism or inaccurate information," she said. "Anything on the Internet affects the grieving process. Gossip usually always hurts."

RIP Facebook groups and Twitter hashtags pose another problem: What if the family of the deceased doesn't want an online memorial?

Vicky White, a 17-year-old from Toronto, started a memorial Facebook page after her classmate died in a car crash earlier this year. "It was a place for everyone to gather to share their memories," she said.

But then the deceased teen's family spoke up.

"There are a lot of complications. I like to put myself out there, but the thing is, (his) family wanted privacy. They want time to heal," White said.

Even with its pitfalls, mourning through social media has its place in the grieving process. According to Fitzgerald, it can be a useful tool when coupled with professional help or a strong support system.

"I think it can be both positive and negative. Funeral homes now have a page where people can write messages to the family. That's positive."

Online etiquette

For those wishing to pay their respects using social media, here are some guidelines:

- Always post accurate information to avoid causing unwarranted anxiety to those trying to heal.
- Never post criticisms of the deceased.
- Don't offer advice, only condolences and support.
- Respect the privacy of those who are mourning.

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Tories just don't understand, import-export group says

Tariff changes. Head of association charges new budget will negatively impact both businesses and consumers

The head of the Canadian Association of Importers and Exporters has launched a blistering attack on the Conservative government for what she's calling its "quest for cash" that is hurting business and will cost consumers.

Joy Nott, the president of I.E. Canada, is wading into an ongoing dispute between a coalition of television importers and the Canadian Border Service Agency over what critics are calling the Harper government's "iPod tax."

Times are a-changin'

A spokesman for the finance minister said changes were "long overdue" because the system punishes Canadian companies by giving "special breaks" to emerging powers like Brazil, China, South Korea, and India based on decades-old program.

TV importers have evidence the government has given them bad advice on tariff exemptions that Ottawa intended to later claw back, including tariffs on TVs, computer speakers and MP3 players, such as iPods.

But Nott says the problem runs deeper, and that major tariff changes announced in Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's March budget will have a ripple effect on Canada's import-export community — and consumers. The budget prominently stated that import duties on some popular sporting goods would be dropped. But buried in the back pages it also noted that Canada would be "graduating" goods from 72 countries to a higher tariff classification, starting in 2015. The measure will bring in $333 million annually, said the government.

"Quite frankly, the single line about the (General Preferential Tariff) changes actually has a much wider and much more negative impact on the ultimate consumer than duty give-aways on cricket bats and hockey sticks and whatever," Nott said in an interview.

She called the sporting goods tariff cuts "almost like a smokescreen." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Monkey snaps up $76,680

They're askew and out of focus, but a set of photos taken by a talented chimpanzee named Mikki sold at auction Wednesday for 50,000 pounds ($76,680). The blurry images of Moscow's Red Square were snapped up by a Russian buyer during a sale of Russian photography at Sotheby's in London. Mikki was trained to take photos in the 1990s by Russian conceptual artists as part of a project to challenge concepts of artistic value. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Housing market

Boost in permits throws analysts

Canada's housing market continues to confound in its resilience in the face of forces that point to a correction from sky-high levels. StatsCan reported that building permits jumped 10.5 per cent in April — 21 per cent on the residential side — a shock to economists that had expected an overall three per cent decline. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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ASS IF YOU NEED TO SPOIL IT...

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

If you spoil TV shows or movies on Facebook and Twitter you are (SPOILER ALERT) a giant ass.

As anyone with social media likely knows, whether you wanted to or not, something big happened this weekend on the TV show Game of Thrones — something that led to an outpouring of emotional responses usually reserved for terrorism and/or Justin Bieber.

I watched it the very second I could, even though that meant spending $25 for a cab ride to get to a night shift on time. Why? Because I knew that even with the scant number of people I haven't blocked in my Facebook feed (12 as of press time), there would be some goofus or other who would need to make a joke about whatever they saw, everybody else's enjoyment be damned.

And I was right. Some men have no honour.

I'm perfectly OK with people saying, "OMG!" or "WTF!" or any other bit of Internet alphabet soup, but after that let it end. A boss of mine had the episode ruined by her dentist, for goodness' sake.

Saying specifically what happens during a show in a tweet or status update is wrong, full stop. I have an Old Testament view of this. It's wrong. There is no grey.

At worst, it shows you lack empathy and don't care if you're ruining it for other people. At best, it makes you that guy who says, "Ooooh, this part coming up is FUNNY. Watch it. Watch it!"

If that's the best you can hope for, it's time to re-evaluate your life.

Some people argue that if you don't want to be spoiled you shouldn't use Facebook and Twitter, but that's ridiculous. That's how people talk to each other. That's our email and calendar. It's a big room we all talk in, and giving stuff away in one sentence is like walking up to someone the day after Empire Strikes Back and saying, Homer Simpson-like, "I can't believe he's Luke's father!"

If you were talking to somebody in person, you'd ask if they saw it first. If you want to talk about it online, provide a link to your longer, spoilery thoughts.

I also don't buy the statute of limitations that says after a while spoiling is OK. I'm sour that by the time I got to Psycho and Citizen Kane I knew the twists, and I've stayed away from The Sopranos and Lost because I know how they end. (SPOILER: In the last episode of Lost, it's revealed the show sucks.)

It's been said that it's your responsibility not to be spoiled. Nonsense. That's as stupid as the argument that a hockey player who gets his head smashed into the boards shouldn't have had his backed turn in the first place, or that a doored cyclist shouldn't have been driving in heavy traffic anyway.

Remaining spoiler-free is an act of self-restraint in a world of information overload. Every viewer knows that they can know everything that happens before a show even airs by taking their smartphone out of their pocket, yet they choose to remain blissfully unaware.

Ending that for them is like walking up to someone on a diet and shoving cake in their mouth. Whether dinner or entertainment, you shouldn't spoil it.

ZOOM

Eat your art out

Didn't your mother teach you not to play with food?

Food artist Ida Skivenes adds a whole new meaning to 'artistic taste' with her recreations of famous masterpieces. The Oslo-based geographer uses toast as her canvas and adds vegetables, cheeses and fruits to complete her 'paintings.' Her series includes remakes of works by Munch, Van Gogh and Vermeer. METRO

IDA SKIVENES/IDAFROSK.COM

Nom nom nom

30

minutes is how long Skivenes takes to complete a culinary recreation. Skivenes' book, Eat Your Art Out: Playful Breakfasts By Idafrosk (her nickname) is due in October.

Q and A

A toast to the edible canvas

IDA SKIVENES
Human geographer and food artist, 29, from Oslo, Norway

How did this nifty culinary project come about?
In June of last year, I joined Instagram to reconnect with my love for photography once more. The food art just happened along the way by way of a happy accident. I had seen some food art online, did my own version and posted it. After that I tried my own ideas and it turned out I had an eye for making art with food.

So you eat your artworks?
Yes, everything is made to be, and is, eaten.

What's the hardest part in remaking famous paintings?
It's recreating the mood and the 'light' in them — and getting all the small details in place.

What do you hope viewers will take away from your work?
I want people to get curious about how art and food are connected. METRO

Click bait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

So you channel a bit more clumsy Tim Taylor than careful Mike Holmes on the DIY front — no big deal. Learning to do things yourself, from homemade pies to home pages, has never been easier. Avoid looking like a fool (or paying for help), and learn to cook, build, create, and fix pretty much anything with DIY sites.

ISTOCK

VideoJug.com
"Get good at life." Their tagline says it all. Professionally made vids teach you how to cook, clean, play cricket and even kiss (with choice of passionate, creative or first kiss).

Howcast.com
Though learning to swim online might not be the best way to go, Howcast at least gives you the option. It can also teach you to 'deal with summer traffic,' if that's more your bag.

Wonderhowto.com
From Minecraft to makeup, Wonder How To has videos, info graphics and forums to help you master useful and completely useless skills — this one truly is "wonderland for your inner nerd."

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Atari games rumoured to be buried in a grave in New Mexico will be dug up by a team of Canadians. What game do you want brought back?

@rmmtenterprises: pacman

@msjenn28: frogger.Loved that game. Use to play it at the lake on rainy days only as we always went outside when it was nice

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

Comments

RE: Rise Of The Promposal: High School Proms Just Ain't What They Used To Be, published June 4

And you thought teen pregnancy was bad. Now they just get married way too soon for no real reason. Why is youth wasted on the young?
terry mckinney posted to metronews.ca

We just attended our daughter's and I would have to say it is only as good as what you put into it, it's a shame people do not try harder as it is one day you should remember.
Justme posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU: Send us your comments: reginaletters@metronews.ca

metro

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SCENE

No need to stop acting the fool

Comedy. General Fools Festival has become an annual improv event for comedy troupes from the region

BACKSTAGE PASS
Alyssa McDonald
alyssa.mcdonald@metronews.ca

The General Fools Improvisational Theatre is holding their annual improv festival this weekend. MIKE FLY

It's a hostage situation.

A person is in a field room with a live video feed being displayed on a screen inside the Artesian on 13th Avenue.

The catch? Improvisers at the General Fools Festival must use what is happening on that feed as fuel for their live show on Thursday night.

Oh, and the person in the field room is another performer, not technically a hostage.

Hostage is just one of the many formats audiences will see at the General Fools Festival this weekend — much like the Japanese game show, the zombie horror apocalypse and the many improvised film sketches performed over the last four years at the annual improvisation event.

"Every single night is different, every single show is different," said Regina improviser and the festival director Jayden Pfeifer.

"We've been doing this festival for four years and I have yet to see one single bad show. I'd expect this year to be no different."

On the agenda for the four-day festival is a number of different show formats including Red Hot Riot, Pfeifer's live variety show, a science-fiction show about a crew on a space station and a Canadian parody of NPR's radio show This American Life.

Much of the content for the show will be based off suggestions at the beginning of the sketch from audience members.

Michal Grajewski says audience participation is key to inspire the improvisers and that everyone is part of the joke as "they are laughing with you."

"If (the audience) is having fun, you are having fun," added Grajewski, who has been performing with the General Fools for about 10 years and joined the company about four years ago.

"I always love playing in Regina … It's always a great crowd, they are always into whatever is going on and you get a lot of love back when you are on stage."

The General Fools Festival started on Wednesday night with a tournament for the improvisers and will continue until Saturday night with nightly 7:30 p.m. performances and 10 p.m. shows on Friday and Saturday. Tickets are $15 or you can buy a festival pass for $60, with a limit of 150 people attending a show.

Joining the General Fools on stage are troupes Toronto's Bad Dog Theatre, as well as Instant Theatre and Hip.Bang!, both from Vancouver.

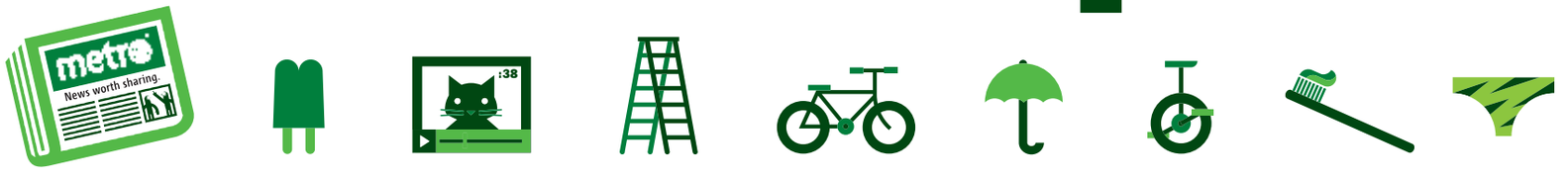
"The artists that we bring to this festival are some of the greatest improvisers in Canada," said Pfeifer.

No bad shows

"We've been doing this festival for four years and I have yet to see one single bad show. I'd expect this year to be no different."

Jayden Pfeifer.
Regina improviser and the festival director

Sharability



METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Amanda Bynes ALL IMAGES GETTY

Playboy offer seems to be a tempting Tweet for Bynes

The repercussions of Amanda Bynes' erratic behaviour aren't all bad, apparently, as the troubled former child star has been invited by Playboy Radio to co-host its afternoon show for a day. The folks behind the offer were smart enough to reach out to Bynes via her preferred communication medium, Twitter, and she's apparently open to the idea, as she re-tweeted their offer.

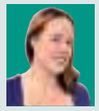
Jennifer Love Hewitt

Love Hewitt loved up, engaged AND pregnant

Jennifer Love Hewitt and her Client List co-star Brian Hallisay are getting married — and expecting a baby. "This is a wonderful time and we are looking forward to starting our family," the couple says in a statement. There's no word yet on a wedding date or a due date. Hewitt first met Hallisay while making the NBC series Love Bites, but they did not start dating until last year. Hallisay proposed last month while they were vacationing in Europe.

The Word

Paris Jackson hospitalized after possible suicide attempt



THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Being 15 is hard. Being 15 when you don't have a father, your mother was pretty much bought solely for her uterus, your family legacy is complicated (to say the least) and you are extremely wealthy must be almost unbearable. So I feel for Paris Jackson, I really do. The 15-year-old daughter of Michael Jackson was hospitalized early Wednesday morning in what is being described as a "possible suicide attempt." Reports flew around the Internet yesterday that the attempt was either carried through via drug overdoes or cuts to her wrist after being removed via stretcher from her Calabasas, Calif., family house she shares with her legal co-guardian Katherine Jackson. TMZ.com reports that the teen was upset about not being able to go to a June 6 Marilyn Manson concert. Sadly, her Twitter page has been filled with depressive tweets as of late. The most recent one is: "yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away now it looks as though they're here to stay."

Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith

Jada says she'd never abandon hubby Will once the kids are alright

While she and husband Will Smith have battled their share of breakup rumours in the past year, Jada Pinkett Smith is standing by her man. "What is the one thing that Will could do to make me not love him? That would make me abandon him? I can't think of one, I'm sorry," she tells Redbook magazine. "Except if he did something bad to the kids — now we've got a problem."

Twitter

@Rihanna
Got the keys to #CoCoChanels apartment!!! Yesterday=Most Legendary day in Paris!!!!

@TheRealRosanne
today was my third earthquake in a month-

@pattonoswalt
As the Ambien drapes its sleep-shawl over my eyelids, it whispers, "Stay on Twitter. Let the world know my garbled wisdom."

Summer Carpet Cleaning Sale
Living Room, Dining Room & Hallway
Regular $139
$99
COUPON EXPIRES JULY 11, 2013.
A1 Choice Carpet Cleaning & Janitorial Services Inc.
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or book online at A1 Choice Carpet Cleaning.ca

A product junkie gossips

Beauty. Tika Sumpter has a flawless face and weakness for budget beauty products. We look inside her makeup bag.

ROMINA McGUINNESS
Metro World News

Tika Sumpter currently stars in the upcoming series The Haves and the Have Nots on the Oprah Winfrey Network. MICHELLE BOBB-PARRIS

Cover Girl Queen Collection Natural Hue Bronzer in Ebony Bronze

"I love it because it contours without making your face look contoured. It just gives it extra dimension."

COVERGIRL.COM

Tarte Cosmetics Matte Lip Tint in Exposed

"I'm a no-fuss makeup person and this colour is so easy and wearable. I don't like lip gloss because it comes off easy but this stuff — even if it does come off, you can just throw it back on."

TARTECOSMETICS.COM

Make Up For Ever HD Foundation in Coffee

"It's so light on your skin it barely feels like you have anything on. You just need to make sure you blend it in properly, especially where your face ends and your neck begins."

MAKEUPFOREVER.COM

House of Lashes Au Naturale Hollywood Glam Lashes

"You would think these (are too over the top) but when you put the lashes on, you look insane. They will change your life."

HOUSEOFLASHES.COM

Tika on:

Her beauty takeaways from Gossip Girl and Sparkle

"Gossip Girl was a very clean show. They didn't do heavy makeup. But the movie Sparkle introduced me to '60s makeup, which I'm now obsessed with. If you're going to line my eyes, it now has to be the blackest liner possible."

Her favourite DIY beauty elixirs:

"At night, I take a washrag, add a pump of coconut oil and remove my makeup with hot water. Then I wash my face with the Murad AHA/BHA Exfoliating Cleanser (murad.com) and moisturize with a dab of Keri lotion. I do the same in the morning, minus the oil."

Her go-to complexion fixer:

"I'm pretty religious with my skin care. But sometimes, I come home and I'm like, 'I don't care!' And when I wake up, my pillow is covered in makeup and I can hear my pores screaming. To fix things, I'll apply the Queen Helene Mint Julep Masque (queenhelene.com). It shrinks your pores and dries up pimples."

Trend of the week: Sneakers that pop

The brighter the better. Look at this season's trainers as a sportier replacement to your ballet slipper flats, wearing them with everything from dresses to tailored trousers.

Topshop

neon runners
$70, topshop.com

Zara

multi-coloured trainers
$90, zara.com

Jimmy Choo

glittery sneakers
$465, netaporter.com

Cream-heavy Pasta Primavera slims down for the summer

This recipe serves six. It contains 390 calories and seven grams of fat per serving. MARK SHAPIRO, FROM ROSE REISMAN BRINGS HOME LIGHT PASTA (ROBERT ROSE)

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

This is my light version of Pasta Primavera, which is usually made with a heavy cream sauce loaded with calories and fat.

1. Cook pasta in boiling water according to package instructions or until firm to the bite. Just before the pasta is cooked, add the broccoli, snow peas, red peppers and green peas to the boiling water, and cook for 2 minutes. Drain and place in serving bowl. Add tomatoes, basil, parsley and cheese.

2. Meanwhile, make the sauce: In nonstick saucepan, melt margarine; add flour and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Slowly add milk, stock, garlic, and salt and pepper; stir constantly until sauce slightly thickens, approximately 4 minutes. Add 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese until melted. Remove from heat. Add to pasta, garnish with 1/3 cup grated Parmesan and toss well. ROSE REISMAN BRINGS HOME LIGHT PASTA (ROBERT ROSE) BY ROSE REISMAN

Ingredients

- 12 oz linguine
- 1 1/2 cups chopped broccoli
- 1 1/2 cups chopped snow peas
- 1 cup sliced red peppers
- 1 cup frozen green peas
- 1 2/3 cups chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Sauce

- 1 tbsp margarine or butter
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 cup 2% milk
- 1 1/4 cups chicken stock
- 1 1/2 tsp crushed garlic
- Salt and pepper
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

For your phone

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
life@metronews.ca

Mind Watering (iPad; $4.99)

With ingredients perfectly laid out, timers at the ready and page-turning voice commands, this very visual step-by-step cookbook of 51 recipes and tricks is deliciously organized.

Metro Exclusive

Cook with Vikram Vij and Metro

Metro and Vikram Vij are teaming up once again to give readers on opportunity to cook along with the renowned chef during a live webstream tonight at 9 ET/6 PT at metronews.ca/vijcooklive. Don't have your ingredients yet? Go to metronews.ca to download a shopping list so you can hit the store on your way home. You can also get a copy of the recipe so you can follow along as Vij cooks live. You will also be able to tweet him at #VijCookLive. METRO

Casserole that unites Pulled Pork and Mac & Cheese

1. Heat the oven to 425 F. Coat a 9-inch springform baking pan with cooking spray.

2. In bowl, mix paprika, cumin, chili powder and 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper.

3. Slice sweet potatoes thinly as possible. Arrange single layer of slices in prepared pan. Sprinkle with bit of spice blend, then spritz with cooking spray. Repeat with additional layers of sweet potatoes and seasonings until you have used all of the slices and seasoning mixture.

4. Bake 15 minutes, or until tender and lightly browned at the edges. Remove pan from the oven and set aside.

5. Meanwhile, bring saucepan of water to simmer. Add pork and cook 1 hour. Remove the pork from pan. Using 2 forks, tear and shred the pork into bite-sized pieces. Discard the water from the pan, then return the pork to it. Add the barbecue sauce and vinegar, then mix well. Set aside.

6. Bring saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook until al dente according to package directions. Reserve 1/4 cup of cooking water, then drain the pasta and return to saucepan. Return pasta to medium heat and add the creme fraîche, cheddar and Gruyère. Stir until melted, then add a splash of hot sauce. Season with salt and pepper.

7. Spread pulled pork in an even layer over the roasted sweet potatoes. Spread Mac and Cheese over the pork.

8. In bowl, mix Parmesan, panko and butter. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mix evenly over the Mac and Cheese, then bake for 15 minutes, or until the breadcrumbs are lightly toasted and the centre of the casserole is hot.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

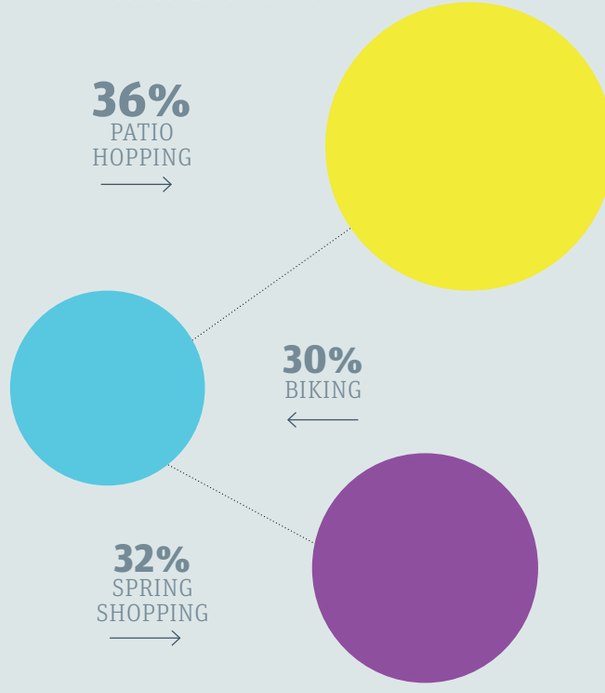
Ingredients

- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp chili powder
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 lbs pork tenderloin, cut into 2-inch chunks
- 13 1/2-oz bottle BBQ sauce
- 1 to 2 tbsp cider vinegar
- 8 oz elbow pasta
- 1/4 cup creme fraîche
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup grated Gruyere cheese
- Hot sauce, to taste
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted

Metropolitan Panel

Lunch meeting...on the patio!

We asked our Metropolitan Panel what spring activity they most looked forward to.*



Share your opinion. Join our Metropolitan Panel at www.metropolitan.ca

*Selections were not exclusive of each other and included other activities.

Decorating trends for the cool kids

In a few weeks school will be ending for many elementary school children. With a week or two lagging before summer camp, it's a great time to get them organizing and sprucing up their bedrooms. Online shopping is easier than ever, so maybe it's time to let the kids be creative and do a little shopping for ways to 'trend-up' their room; of course you will want to keep your credit card number a secret! Here's a few smart decor items to create an on-trend wonderland.

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Best drama paint

Want a paint colour that looks as perfect with denim blues as with hot pink? Try Para Paint's honey brulee PF55 for a punch of acidic gold to wake up any space. para.com.

Sleeping in space

When the lights go out you're off to outer space with the photorealism of the Astronaut Duvet Cover Set, $95, Simons.ca.

Dream Beds

Gypsy prints inspire hours of mind-wandering and writing in diaries with the Daydreamer Quilted Collection, $48 to $228, anthropologie.com.

Earth under foot

Play on top of the world with the Trompe L'Oeil Earth Floor Mat, $175 (4x6), urbanoutfitters.com.

Keeping it organized

Keep everything organized with fabric-covered boxes and totes. Geo Storage Boxes, $29 to $39, pottery-barnkids.ca.

Removable wall art

Direct traffic in and out of your bedroom with iconic road signs that are peel and stick easy! Road Signs, $35 set of 14 stickers, wallpops.com.

Sit pretty

Create a whimsical wonderland bedroom with a colourful crocheted toadstool. Mushroom Pouf, $168, anthropologie.com.

Sure, there's a school, but where's the Whole Foods?

Relocation. Jason Abrams, real estate to pro-athletes, shares 10 tips to help you find your way

Scoring The Deal follows Jason Abrams, the Jerry Maguire of real estate, as he helps pro-athletes buy and sell homes worth millions of dollars.

Whereas most agents work in a specific area, Jason specializes in any city with a pro stadium, often working on a deadline of only a few days after an athlete is traded.

Crime Doesn't Pay
It is important to check the crime rates (especially the violent crimes) in the areas you are thinking of relocating to. Homes located within areas with high crime rates ALWAYS have the potential to lose value quickly.

Shop until you drop
Make sure to check out the proximity to your favourite stores before you move. If you love Whole Foods, best not to move to a city that doesn't have one.

Be there in time
Let's face it, unless you are Scrooge McDuck and swimming in gold coins you will be commuting to work every day. Make sure that you will not be spending hours upon hours driving to and from work.

School is cool
If you have kids, make sure you check out the latest school rankings.

Walk-ability
How walkable is your new city? Studies show that prices appreciate more in walkable cities.

Mile high club
Airports are important if you travel for work or vacation multiple times a year. It's nice to be close, but not too close.

Emergency on aisle 5
Proximity to a hospital is crucial. Let's hope you never need to go, but if you do, you best know how to get there.

We like a southwest feel
Get to know the local home style before you arrive. If you like adobe-style southwest homes, move to Arizona not Ontario.

Opera anyone?
The arts are important — opera, theatre, music — but let's face it, what we really mean here is how far is the closest hockey arena?

Need a ride
Mass transit has come a long way. If you will be using the subway, light rail, street cars, or RT make sure you know where the closest pick up is.

SCORING THE DEAL AIRS WEDNESDAYS AT 10 P.M. ET/PT ON HGTV CANADA

Before you hop on the back of the moving truck, make sure you know where you're going.
ISTOCK IMAGES

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HARDWOOD DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HARD

Help keep your finished wood* floors looking great with Swiffer WetJet Wood solution.

SHINIER. Swiffer WetJet Wood solution dissolves dirt and tough, sticky messes to help reveal more shine than a mop on glossy ceramic tiles, hardwood and laminate floors.

FASTER. Forget mops and spending time on your floors. Swiffer WetJet delivers a great clean in less time vs. microfiber mop & bucket.

CONVENIENT. Swiffer WetJet is an all-in-1 mopping system. Just one simple wood solution that dissolves dirt and tough, sticky messes, revealing the natural shine of finished wood floors.

Designed for wood.

Swiffer WetJet Wood solution is designed to be safe and gentle on your finished wood floors, revealing its natural shine. With a dual-nozzle sprayer and a strong-grip pole, this bucket-less mopping system also features a scrubby strip for powering through tough dried-on messes.

*Do not use on unfinished wood, oiled or waxed wooden boards, non-sealed tiles or carpeted floors because they may be water sensitive.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT SWIFFER.CA

NHL

Keith suspended for Game 4 in L.A. after high stick

If the Chicago Blackhawks are going to end the Los Angeles Kings' perfect post-season on home ice in Game 4 of the Western Conference final, they'll have to do it without their top defenceman.

Duncan Keith will sit out Thursday under a one-game suspension for high-sticking Los Angeles' Jeff Carter. Keith hit Carter with a one-handed blow in the second period of the Kings' 3-1 victory in Game 3, opening a 20-stitch gash on the star forward's face and cracking three of his teeth.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Tiger-Cats leave out welcome mat for Chris Williams

Kent Austin is leaving the door open for Chris Williams to have a change of heart.

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats head coach and general manager says he would entertain having Williams return to the CFL club, despite the disgruntled receiver's unsuccessful attempt to have the final year of his contract voided.

An arbitrator ruled Tuesday that Williams' deal with the Ticats was binding even though it was negotiated by an unregistered agent, which is a violation of the CFL's collective bargaining agreement. But, in the opinion of the arbitrator, that still wasn't enough to rule the contract void.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jays starter R.A. Dickey cracks a double on Wednesday to cash in Toronto's first run in San Francisco. MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A most interesting interleague outcome

MLB. Jays starter Dickey drives in winning run with double, pitches 8-plus innings of two-hit ball in San Francisco

On Wednesday

Blue Jays	Giants
4	0

With his knuckleball dancing, R.A. Dickey once again looked like the Cy Young Award winner the Toronto Blue Jays acquired in the off-season.

Dickey allowed two hits in 8 1/3 innings and sparked a four-run fifth with an RBI double, leading Toronto to a 4-0 victory over the San Francisco Giants on Wednesday.

"He was just about perfect today," Blue Jays manager John Gibbons said. "He had it all going on. He was in the strike zone. Everything was really dancing today.... That's him at his best right there."

Mark DeRosa added a two-run single and Adam Lind had three hits for his eighth multi-hit performance in the past 12 games, helping the Blue Jays earn a split of the two-game series.

Barry Zito (4-4) was done in by the one big inning in his first loss at home since last August.

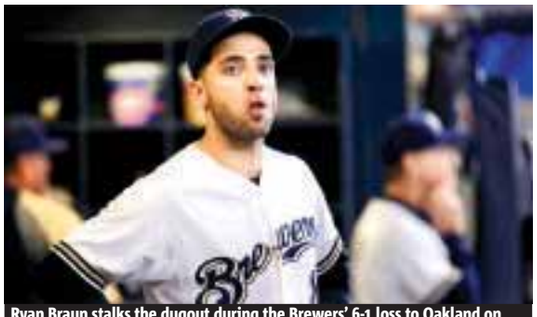
Dickey (5-7) bounced back from a pair of starts in which he allowed six runs each to Baltimore and Atlanta and the back and neck problems that contributed to his slow start in Toronto seem to be in the past.

He was able to change speeds with his knuckler and throw it for strikes all game.

"I was changing speeds a lot today, which was good," Dickey said. "I was able to throw a 63, 64 miles per hour one for a strike and I was able to throw a 79 miles per hour one for a strike. As I've gotten healthier, I felt like I've been able to have the latitude to be able to do that. Before it was just trying to muster everything I could to survive an outing."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB just scratching surface of PED probe



Ryan Braun stalks the dugout during the Brewers' 6-1 loss to Oakland on Wednesday in Milwaukee. MORRY GASH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One by one, for three weeks already, players accompanied by their lawyers have been summoned to interviews as part of baseball's latest investigation into performance-enhancing drugs — and the process is a long way from finished.

Some pretty big names, led by Alex Rodriguez, could be on the hot seat.

A-Rod, Ryan Braun, Nelson Cruz, Melky Cabrera and Bartolo Colon are among the 20 or so players who may be disciplined for their links to the now-closed Miami anti-aging clinic, Biogenesis of America.

The players' union says it has been assured no decisions regarding discipline will be made until the interviews are completed.

"It would be unfortunate if anyone prejudged those investigations," union head Michael Weiner said in a statement Wednesday.

And it appears the process has a while to run.

Interviews with players are scheduled until the end of June, according to people with knowledge of the process who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"Every player has been or will be represented by an attorney from the players' association," Weiner said.

MLB has been seeking the co-operation of Biogenesis founder Anthony Bosch since Miami New Times reported in January that it obtained what the paper said were records detailing drug purchases by Rodriguez, Cabrera, Cruz and Colon. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Someone will call on you to mediate a dispute today and while you would prefer not to get involved, you can't really say no. Look at the facts and deliver your verdict — then get out of the way fast.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
It may be tempting to get angry with someone who brings you bad news but it's not their fault — and won't solve a thing. Besides, if you are honest, you'll admit part of the blame rests with you.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Cosmic activity in and around your birth sign may make all things possible but you still need to select your aims with care. Even a Gemini has only a fixed amount of time and energy to invest. Use it wisely.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
For some reason, you appear to believe that if you don't act immediately you will miss out. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, you should drag your feet a little.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you try to please too many people, you will end up pleasing no one. You can't do favours for everyone but you can do favours for those who count the most — or whose need is most urgent.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
A plan close to your heart is coming together and you are almost ready to announce it to the world. Don't be too hasty. Make sure it's foolproof.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Don't read into what others say today. Most likely they are talking about things they know nothing about. Trust your instincts, even when they lead you in a different direction than everyone else.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Put the past behind you and move on with a smile. Whatever mistakes you may have made mean nothing now, so why make a big issue of them? Life is a learning experience, with lots of loving.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Never mind what others expect of you, what do you expect of yourself? That question is important but never more so than now as the approaching new moon maximizes your options. Identify your goals.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may not be the sort to back out of a fight but you are smart enough not to start one when you know you can't win. Someone you work with may be a drag but they also have all the power, so be nice.

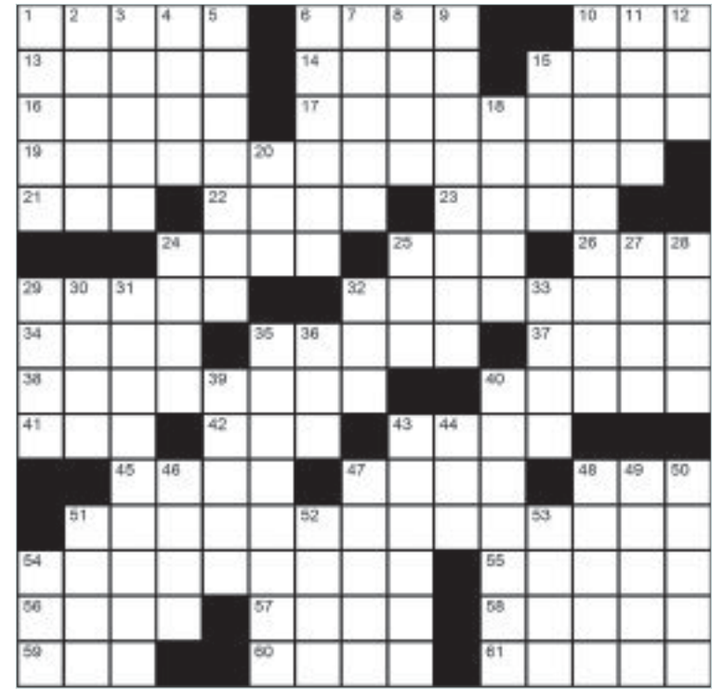
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Tempers may get a bit frayed today but looking back you may wonder what all the fuss was about. Still, it's always good to get bad feelings out in the open.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Pay attention to a colleague's personal needs today because their interests and your interests are more closely connected than you might imagine. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



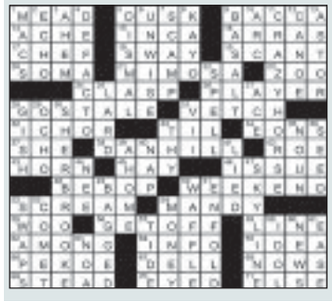
Across

1. Bard's below
6. Carlos __ (Spanish tennis player)
10. __-mo replay
13. Bonus
14. Mischa of "My Man Godfrey" (1936)
15. "Take __ __ face value."
16. Measuring stick
17. Rolled-around breaktime sight at work: 2 wds.
19. JUNE 6TH, 1944: Juno, Gold, Sword, Omaha and Utah: 2 wds.
21. Progressive rock band
22. Ye's follower
23. "To Live and Die __ _._." (1985)
24. Russian assembly
25. Trellis plant
26. Dove's murmur
29. Batman abode, Wayne __
32. Escape from prison: 2 wds.
34. Camaro model, __-Z
35. Attempts
37. Against
38. Tidy or groom: 2 wds.
40. Category
41. Fitness system, __ Bo
42. Mil. command posts
43. Eminem movie, "8 __" (2002)
45. Shirley Ann __ (Pulitzer-winning writer)
47. Drive a bike
48. Potpie morsel
51. Meal time-savers: 2 wds.
54. "__ in Seattle" (1993)
55. Annuls
56. Camping beds
57. Have _ __ to pick
58. Mr. Coombs of "Mr. Dressup"
59. "__ showtime!"
60. Lacking
61. Adjust, as an alarm clock

Down

1. Broken-eyeglasses-with-tape characteristic
2. Give off, as confidence
3. Maps book
4. Deuce-ace
5. Halifax __
6. Ancient fortress atop a plateau of Israel
7. Unit of weight
8. Casual affirmative
9. In Ottawa: Library and __ Canada
10. Quebec City, when it was an Iroquoian village
11. Metallica drummer Mr. Ulrich
12. Baseball great Mel
15. Suffix with 'Poet'
18. Where Nairobi is the capital
20. Tree type
24. TV show genre, __-drama
25. Choler
27. Baseball stats
28. "Willie and the Hand Jive" by Johnny __
29. Maid of the __ (Boat ride at Niagara Falls)
30. Harp, in Italy
31. Tom Cochrane tune: 2 wds.
32. Marcel Marceau's clown
33. Leafy veggie
35. Agave beverages
36. Toys "_" __ (Chain store)
39. Victor
40. The __ Family, as on TV classic "Leave It to Beaver"
43. Central spots
44. Partners to egos
46. Roger who played Robin Colcord on "Cheers"
47. Myrrh, for example
48. Inflictions
49. Moviedom's Mr. Murphy
50. Strong point
51. Conspiracy
52. "__: Warrior Princess"
53. Handed-down history
54. __-Fi

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku

8	3	7	4	5	1	2	6	9
1	4	6	9	2	3	5	8	7
2	9	5	6	7	8	3	1	4
7	6	9	8	3	2	4	5	1
3	8	1	5	4	9	6	7	2
5	2	4	1	6	7	8	9	3
6	1	3	7	8	4	9	2	5
9	5	2	3	1	6	7	4	8
4	7	8	2	9	5	1	3	6

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